

TESTIMONY FOR THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING,
FEBRUARY 17, 2009

RE: CONNECTICUT COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND DEPT
OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Dear Sen. Harp, Rep Geragosian and Honorable members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Farmington Land Trust to beg you not to let the CEQ go unfunded and destroyed by "merger" [annihilation] into the Department of Environmental Protection.

We in the Land Trust Community rely on the CEQ to serve as our watchdog. The CEQ has kept a watchful eye on activities in realms likely to impact the environment in both positive and negative ways. They have been our "canary in the coal mine", and an early [or unfortunately sometimes too late] warning system to alert us that activities are afoot which will damage the fragile ecosystems of our beautiful State. Here in Farmington, their help was essential in obtaining legislation to prevent encroachments on protected open space.

Other important roles of the CEQ are enumerated in the testimony of Margaret Miner of Rivers Alliance, to which we subscribe.

Please do what you can in this difficult budget year to preserve the CEQ. Some budget-cutting causes temporary damage. Eliminating this vital agency will risk environmental injury that is more permanent and far-reaching.

Thank you, and good luck with your difficult budget-trimming tasks.

Very truly yours,



Charles N. Leach Jr., M.D.
President, Farmington Land Trust
174 Main Street, Farmington 06032
860-677-8076 [FLT Office 674-8545]

